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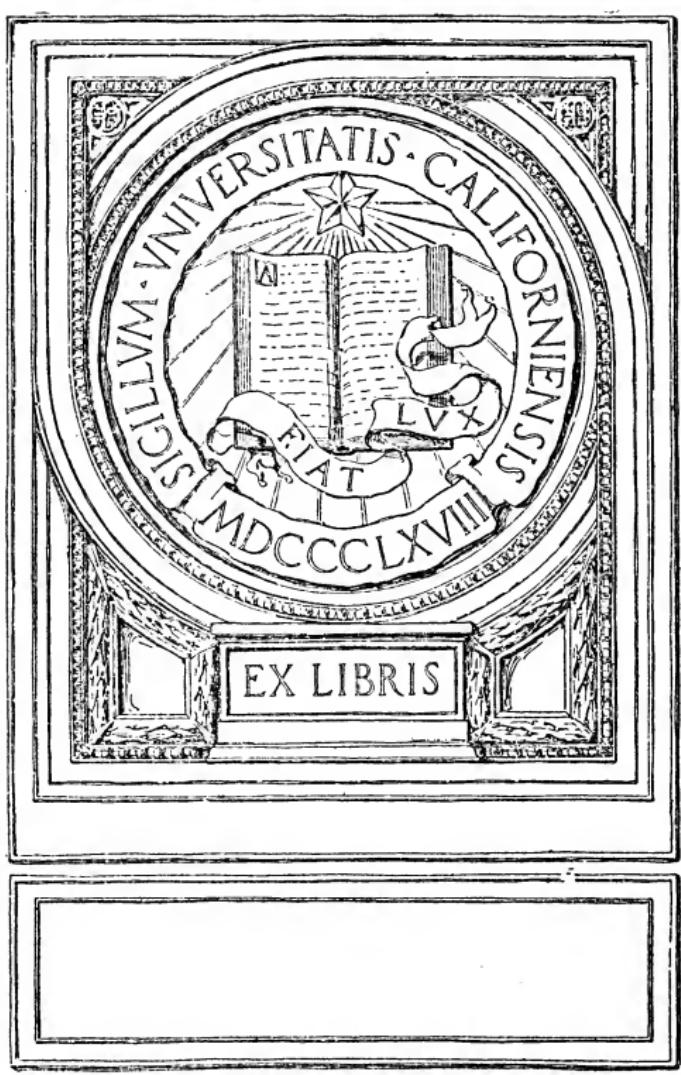
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# A Voice Out of Russia

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**T**HE treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy."

"There is, moreover, a voice calling for these definitions of principle and of purpose which is, it seems to me, more thrilling and more compelling than any of the many moving voices with which the troubled air of the world is filled. It is the voice of the Russian people. They are prostrate and all but helpless, it would seem, before the grim power of Germany, which has hitherto known no relenting and no pity. Their power, apparently, is shattered. And yet their soul is not subservient. They will not yield either in principle or in action. Their conception of what is right, of what it is humane and honorable for them to accept, has been stated with a frankness, a largeness of view, a generosity of spirit, and a universal human sympathy which must challenge the admiration of every friend of mankind; and they have refused to compound their ideals or desert others that they themselves may be safe."—President Wilson in an address delivered at a joint session of the two houses of Congress, January 8, 1918.

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## Withdraw from Russia!

On March 15, 1917, the news of the abdication of the Czar was flashed around the world. Democratic nations rejoiced; and America, itself founded on a revolution, sent its sympathy and greeting to the people of Russia who had burst through the chains of centuries of black oppression. Less than a month later we ourselves entered the war against Germany. We had suffered very little either in property loss or in human life; indeed our neutrality had brought us prosperity. Russia, on the contrary, had suffered all things: betrayal at the front, unprecedented slaughter of her soldiers, disorganization, unemployment, famine, disease. Her army was going to pieces. It was not the time for the Allied nations to urge her to continue the war against Germany—a war which, Bolshevik or no Bolshevik, Constituent Assembly or no Constituent Assembly, counter-revolution or no counter-revolution, it was physically impossible for her to undertake. Yet the Allied nations did urge her, and as a result of their urging the disastrous advance into Galicia was begun. It ended in perhaps the greatest retreat in history. And new, strange voices began to be heard in Russia, voices which asked President Wilson precisely what he meant by his phrase a world "safe for democracy," voices which challenged the aims of the Allies. Russia, these voices said, wanted a peace with "no annexations, no indemnities, and the right of all peoples to determine their own destiny." It was a magic phrase. The Allied nations could ignore it no longer.

We cannot give in detail the tragic history of the summer and autumn of 1917. But the main outlines of that history, as far as Russia is concerned, are clear. Not once, but again and again, did the Kerensky Government appeal to the Allied nations for a revision of war aims. Not once, but again

and again, were the Russian people promised that revision. Yet the revision was never made. The secret treaties (known about all over Russia) were never repudiated. And inevitably the Bolsheviks came into power, as much from the blundering of the Allied nations and from their unwillingness to subscribe to the tenets of real democratic peace as from any other reason. What the previous governments had promised to the Russian people and never had secured the Bolsheviks did secure. The previous governments had promised publication of the secret treaties, division of the land—and peace. They fulfilled none of their promises. But almost the first act of the new Bolshevik Government was the publication of the secret treaties. The decree on land,—dividing the estates according to promise—[which we reprint on another page of this pamphlet], was the first official act of the new government, and together with the decree on peace made great political capital for the Bolshevik Party. Although Lenin apologized at the time for the haste with which the decree on land was brought out, its main provisions were later adopted by the All Russian Congress of the Soviets. Peace with Germany was also procured, first by an armistice and finally by the ratification of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 16, 1918—ironically enough within one day of one year after the beginning of the Revolution itself.

Following the Bolshevik success, what the whole course of events and policy has shown is that for the first time in the history of the modern world we are confronted with an economic revolution instead of a merely political revolution. The Soviet Government might have been captured by any one of the many political parties of Russia, the Mensheviks, the Right Social Revolutionary Party, even the Left Communist Party (which accuse both Lenin and Trotzky of being “reactionaries”!), and so on. It

was as a matter of fact carried by the Bolshevik Party, which, in spite of reports to the contrary, gained in strength as time went on and today, after over a year of its rule, has behind it the majority support of the Russian people and can actually hope in the coming spring to have a Red Army of perhaps three million soldiers ready to lay down their lives in its defense. Why? What is the vital principle of the Bolsheviks that keeps them so long in power? From what background do they spring? What do they want?

Although these questions deserve detailed answers, we wish to state, for the sake of clearness, our belief concerning the chief points. Russians regard us, as well as many others in Western nations, as political infants. They are not content with what we glibly call democracy. Their hopes and aspirations are centered on a greater experiment than merely representative government. They are intensely communistic, more so than the people of any other country. They want actually to abolish the whole institution of private property. They want to create a government which is entirely a people's government, a government of the workers and the poor peasants. They will, if they can, abolish the capitalist class. Contrary to report, they bear no ill will against the intellectuals as a class, although they recognize the basic truth of the psychology of the intellectual class; that is, they regard the intellectuals as parasites on the so-called capitalist class. Yet they hold the professions and the arts in high honor. Their program for universal education is extensive, and is not confined to merely vocational training. The Soviet Government has encouraged individual artists, subsidized theaters and the ballet and the opera. It has reprinted the great classics of literature in inexpensive form for everybody. It recognizes the need for technical experts and for discipline of all kinds. Funda-

mentally, however, it is interested in maintaining a workers' government, supported, as Lenin so eloquently phrased it in a speech before the Moscow Soviet, by "the regular march of the iron battalions of the proletariat."

One point more, perhaps, needs emphasis. The universality of the stories in the daily press about the "Red Terror" and the mass murder of the bourgeois class demands corrective. In the first place, there was no "Red Terror" before the invasion of Russia by Allied troops. In the second place, the executions are not irresponsible murders, but deliberate measures of self-defense, such as any government in similar circumstances, threatened both by internal and external enemies, invariably adopts. In the third place, the number of them has been grossly exaggerated. In the fourth place, they do not begin to equal the indiscriminate slaughter of Soviet officials practiced by the invading troops (principally the Czecho-Slovaks) whenever they are successful in overthrowing a local Soviet. In the fifth place, plots against the Central Soviet Government have been persistent and unscrupulous, both on the part of the disgruntled Russians who have been expropriated or who have a political axe to grind and on the part of foreign governments, desirous of the overthrow of the present regime. In a word, the Soviet Government has adopted the conventionally harsh method of suppressing the attempts to instigate civil war in Russia. Had the Allied Governments recognized the Soviet Government instead of attacking it, and had they given it the cooperation and assistance which it asked, it is safe to assume that fully nine-tenths of the present "Red Terror" would not have occurred. Recently, moreover, thanks to Allied intervention, the Bolsheviks have become so strong in their internal grip on the situation that they are now in a sufficiently secure position not to need to employ the harsher

measures of the "Red Terror." The brain worker and the petit bourgeois are no longer to be oppressed, but propitiated. The further the armies of the Allied Governments march into Russia the stronger becomes the movement towards reconciliation within the country. It is an ancient phenomenon. Before the foreign enemy domestic differences vanish—all become Russians. Well could Trotzky state that he could have afforded to pay one hundred thousand roubles for every Japanese soldier landed on Russian soil. The blundering policy of the Allied Governments has not only evoked the Bolsheviks—if continued, it will make all Russia support them.

And yet this mad policy has been followed in spite of the many attempts that the Soviet Government has made to cooperate with the Allied Governments. There was always what one might call an undercurrent of flirtation with the Allied Governments. For us there was open friendship: even the more fanatical recognized the difference between a medieval autocracy like Germany and a liberal republic like ourselves. Before the Brest-Litovsk treaty Trotzky requested the American Army to send him officers to instruct the Red Army and to put it in a position to fight Germany again. He requested the English to send him English naval officers to take charge of the Black Sea Fleet in order that it might not fall into the hands of the Germans. He even accepted the proffered help of a few French officers then in Russia, who, according to reliable witnesses, not only did not train the Red Army, but abused the confidence given them to get information which was later put at the disposal of the Czechoslovak troops. After the treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed it was imperative, of course, that appearances should be kept up with Germany. Yet the Soviet Government's appeal to the Allies for co-operation was constant. During February they re-

quested an American railway expert to take charge of the technical details of the Russian railroads, and a little later they informally proposed to give us the right to purchase ore and other raw materials (to purchase it exclusively, in spite of the fact that these were just the things needed then by Germany) in exchange for shipments of American goods to Russia. Liberal exchanges of Russian raw materials for food were guaranteed. Time after time the Soviet Government made direct and indirect offers of commercial cooperation. And usually they signified their complete willingness to renew the war against Germany (for they never hesitated to describe the treaty of Brest-Litovsk as no other than a robber's peace) as soon as the army could be reorganized and supplied with necessary munitions and equipment. Not one of these many offers was acknowledged, much less accepted. There seemed to be a preconcerted plan not to recognize the Soviet Government under any circumstances and no matter what they offered. Since the armistice with Germany they have themselves offered an armistice to the Allied nations. More: according to the Daily News of London, Litvinoff, the representative until recently of the Soviet Government in England, has formally offered any concessions to the Allied nations—including payment on the national debt by what gold is in Russia and by liberal concessions—in return for recognition of the Soviet Government by the Allied nations—and peace. But so far the consistently and sincerely friendly advances of the Soviet Government have been ignored.

Possibly one reason for this has been the star chamber method of conducting our diplomatic relations with the Soviet Government. If public opinion in the various Allied countries—ourselves included—had ever had any opportunity whatever to discuss any of these offers, the situation today might be different. But the news from Russia, par-

ticularly since the Bolsheviks have had control, has been notoriously false. The stories of massacre and anarchy are, of course, largely for effect, and are not to be taken seriously. It is also well known that various governmental censorships, principally the British, have suppressed actual news messages sent by accredited correspondents of accredited news associations from Moscow and Petrograd—messages sent by men who were not themselves Bolsheviks at all, but simply honest journalists. And many are the stories of events by “eye-witnesses” who saw no more than the inside of a hotel in Stockholm. Not a word of the constructive work being done by the Soviet Government has been given out by the press. Such simple documents as we publish on another page, for example, are practically unknown. All that we are allowed are silly stories about new decrees on marriage and free love, issued (where rarely authentic) by irresponsible groups striving to put the Soviet Government in a false light. When a really first-rate analysis of what the Soviet Government is doing is published—like *The Soviets at Work* by Lenin—we are informed by Postmaster General Burleson that it is unmailable. But the worst of all is the fashion in which the news about Allied intervention is distorted. We are led to believe that Allied troops landed in Vladivostok to restore “law and order,” to put down the rule of an anarchical minority and to substitute a democratic government. It is false. There was quiet and the best of law and order at Vladivostok when Allied troops landed. The Soviet had the support and affection of the people. The Allied troops did not set up a democratic government: they set up a reactionary dictatorship. We are prepared to prove that in every case where Allied troops have invaded Russian soil they have overthrown the popular government and set up a temporary government resting for its support on

foreign bayonets, a government reactionary and in some cases even frankly monarchist. It is safe to say that the average American citizen would be thoroughly shocked at knowing the kind of imperialistic and anti-democratic game which is being played by our own and our Allies' armies in Russia. These are facts and we think it high time that they be told. We do not believe that our own Government wants the restoration of the monarchy in Russia or that it would support a demonstrably unpopular government forever. The American Government would like to see in Russia a liberal and commercial republic like ourselves—a quiet, respectable government with which we could do business. Undoubtedly. But what we should like and what we are as a matter of cold fact getting are two widely different things. It is no secret that powerful parties in Japan are advocating the unostentatious annexation of large sections of Siberia, and that they have no interest in seeing any stable popular government arise east of the Urals. It is no secret that England trembles for Persia, Afghanistan, and India, and that the Tory party would gladly crush the Russian Revolution if it exhibited any tendency towards proselytism in foreign countries (as it has). It is no secret that a certain section of French governmental opinion cares not a fig what sort of a reactionary government there is in Russia, provided only it is a government that will immediately repay the foreign loan. In a word, our intervention in Russia may have been undertaken with the best of intentions, *but the practical situation with which we are faced today is either to support reaction and imperialism or—to withdraw our troops.* Russian intervention has become for America a tragic anachronism since the defeat of Germany. We have neither a national nor an international interest which today legitimately sanctions the presence of our troops on Russian soil. It is false to our traditions to be fighting a workingman's

republic, even if we do not approve of its form or its manners. It is not in accordance with any doctrine of American national policy for us to be engaged in crushing a revolution or in crucifying the hopes and aspirations of a great and mighty people. It is really difficult to believe that this is the same country which in Washington's time almost had a civil war because this government refused to intervene in the French Revolution, *on behalf of the revolutionists*. And not even the most severe critics of the present leaders of the Soviet Government have said one-tenth as bitter things as were said of Robespierre and Marat in their day. No; to help crush a revolution is not in accordance with the real American tradition.

For that reason we demand of our Government that our troops now in Russia be immediately withdrawn. We are asking no more than British Labor and French Labor and Italian Labor have already officially demanded of their governments. We are asking no more than President Wilson has again and again promised to the Russian people—"We are fighting," said the President in his communication to the Provisional Government of Russia on June 9, 1917, "for the liberty, the self-government, and the undictated development of all peoples, and every feature of the settlement that concludes this war must be conceived and executed for that purpose." We are asking no more than would ask, if they knew the facts, and do ask, those who are aware of them, the soldiers who entered this war inspired by an honest ideal to defeat the menace of German autocracy and to bring freedom to the oppressed peoples of the world. Those who have given their lives on the battlefields of France will rise to reproach us if we are now false to our trust. We have fought for freedom, and as the President has said, the undictated development of all peoples. We demand that Russia have her fair chance at that

freedom and self-development, and that if we are in no position to direct or guide the actions of other nations with respect to her *we* at least shall leave her free to work out her own destiny. Let a war which has not been declared by the nation we are fighting, or by ourselves, cease. And let those representatives of Russia who speak for the majority of the Russian people and not for interested cliques of intriguers have a voice and a hearing at the peace conference.

We demand that freedom of communication with Russia be at once restored, and that the whole truth be permitted to appear without let or hindrance in our periodicals; that the motives back of intervention, be they either political or economic or what not, be given to the American people in order that they may have full knowledge and may of themselves determine whether or not they are willing to back up the present intervention in Russia and what is the logical further activity implied by that intervention. We demand that the open diplomacy for which the President has declared be practiced with respect to Russia. We demand, in a single word, *the truth*. We have lived for the last year in a poisonous atmosphere of lies and slander and intrigue and double-dealing. As Americans, who honestly believe that we speak for the sober second thought of this country and for those who have no organ of publicity or appeal, we demand that once and for all the clean wind of the truth be allowed to sweep away the false conceptions and interested propaganda which have infected the country. We demand of our Government a clear formulation and simple, honest statement of its Russian policy. We demand that that policy be based on the facts and not on lies, that that policy be American and American alone.

THE EDITORS.

## Soviet Russia and the American Revolution

The drawing of historic analogies is a perilous undertaking. On the score of specific incident and detail it would be difficult to establish the case for a comparison between the Russian and the American Revolutions; the two manifestations apparently run in quite independent channels; and it may seem strange that anyone should attempt to draw a parallel between Russia and America in this regard when the French Revolution superficially offers the better analogy. But it is only superficially; after all the specific objections have been freely admitted, after all detailed criticism has been allowed to triumph by default of the argument, there remains a certain divine sense in which the Russian Revolution parallels the revolt of the thirteen American Colonies more nearly than the other, and in which the proletariat of Russia is striving to accomplish for his world much the same ideals which our forefathers laid down for theirs. There was more of the spirit of the people, more of faith and dependence in the proletariat, in American Revolutionary doctrine than we seem disposed to admit today; and by the same token, it is because we have lost our sense of fundamental democracy that we do not care to admit it. But we should think too highly of the outright American ideals to permit them without protest to be swallowed whole by the pseudo-democratic claims of a crass plutocracy. Totally different in form and substance, in method and event, in time, place, circumstance, and era, these two revolutionary manifestations nevertheless have shown the same spirit and have sprung from the same set of universal human impulses. To their respective centuries they have meant the same thing.

In fact, has not the thought arrested liberals everywhere that in the Soviet system we see a fore-

shadowing of the next step forward in the machinery of democratic government, bringing our present machinery, a heritage from a past era, abreast of the new industrialized world? The writers of the American Constitution certainly strove to construct an instrument by virtue of which the actual majority of the electorate should control the government. They certainly strove to render impossible the domination of a ruling class, to do away with the artificial complexities of politics, and to bring every function of government within the grasp and comprehension of the whole electorate. Indeed, they went much farther than this in theory, and by opening the highest office to the lowest citizen they faced and acknowledged the truth that an experience in human mutuality may be a better equipment for the art of governing than education or a cosmopolitan training. In a day of simple industrial, social, and commercial elements, class lines and feelings as they now exist were not included in the category. But these have grown up rapidly under the impetus of industrialism; and along with them have grown, in new guise but in the same unmistakable form, many of the very political and governmental evils which the writers of the American Constitution strove so hard to avoid. Governments have become complex once more, legislatures have passed into the control of lawyers, the body of the electorate does not see and feels that it cannot grasp what is going on, and a ruling class selected along financial attributes definitely dominates the political machinery of Western democracy. In a word, our system of representative government has demonstrated, to the class, at least, which feels the grievance, that under changed economic conditions it does not fairly represent the popular will. Allowing for the great natural difference between the two periods, it is not stretching the point to say that the Soviet system in Russia proposes to do for the new era something

very similar in its political objectives to that which the writers of the American Constitution proposed to do for the old; and that the true purpose of Soviet Russia, irrespective of its transitory class dogma, is to simplify government again and to bring it under the control of the actual majority.

And the great danger which besets us is that, in the confusion of issues and events, the true democratic fundamentals of Russia may not be recognized in time by American and Allied statesmanship; and that the natural development of the Russian democracy may be hopelessly compromised by interference from abroad. This, in turn, would quickly undermine what democracy is left to us in the West, and might too easily bring about the cataclysm. The future of civilization seems to hang between the devil of selfish privilege and the deep sea of an inadequate statesmanship. From the beginning of the Revolution Russia has relentlessly precipitated for the democratic world the issue which could not be put aside.

It is certain that Russia cannot continue permanently to be governed on a class basis. The logic of life and history precludes such an outcome. All the tendencies of human relationships stand unalterably opposed to it. The outright class program of Soviet Russia, which already shows distinct signs of becoming modified under the pressure of events and responsibilities, is bound to be still farther modified, until it loses its strictly class character. The existing bourgeoisie may easily be disposed of, but there is no provision in the class program for the new bourgeoisie which inevitably will be developed out of the body of the proletariat. The various political parties of Russia, at present representing highly antagonistic class groups, must ultimately come together in some workable form of constitutional and parliamentary coalition. The furthering

of this process should be the great task confronting American and Allied statesmanship today.

Briefly, the political issue in Russia lies between two systems of governmental authority based on different principles of election and representation: the Soviet system; based on class units; and the system of the Constituent Assembly, based on the old geographical units. The Soviet system breaks up the old geographical election district into class units, each one of which elects its own delegate to the local Soviet; and the local Soviet, in turn, elects its delegates to the next higher body. This, roughly, is the central principle of an extensive governmental system the details of which do not properly come within the range of the present article. The basis of the Constituent Assembly, on the other hand, is the old geographical election district established under the Czar's regime at the time of the first Duma. This also is the Zemstvo election district.

The Soviet system made its appearance in Russia coincident with the first Revolution of the spring of 1917. It was the authority of the Soviet system, through its first manifestation in the Council of Soldiers' and Workers' Delegates in Petrograd, which brought about the downfall of the Provisional Government a few weeks after the Revolution. Throughout the summer of 1917, under the Coalition Government and during the Kerensky regime, the Soviet system was the real power in Russia. From the very beginning the forces representing the Constituent Assembly have not been able to stand against the Soviet authority, although many counter-revolutions in the name of the Constituent Assembly have been supported from abroad. All the events of the Revolution prove the case. The authority of the Soviet system has maintained itself in the face of the combined hostility of the world, and is stronger today than it was six months ago.

The fact is that the Soviet system is a new machinery of representative government, derived from the principle of class representation, and in the case of Russia taking its roots in the local machinery of the ancient village *Mir*. It is a system simple and direct enough to be understood by the peasants and workingmen, and through it they are able without handicap to exercise their traditional training in local self-government and to apply it to the broader field of national politics. There is nothing undemocratic about the Soviet system; its ideal seems to be to produce a government actually representative of the proportional groupings of modern society. With the addition of the class feature, it is nothing but an extension of our own town-meeting principle. Let us have class caucuses in town-meeting, and we have the local Soviet. At any rate, this system is a natural product of social and political fundamentals in Russia, and as such plainly is indispensable to the development of the true Russian democracy.

So the real issue, throughout the Revolution, has been between two antagonistic systems of representative government rather than between various political parties. On the one hand were the Bolsheviks and certain groups of the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, who steadfastly supported the Soviet system. On the other hand were the Cadets and the reactionary fringe of the center parties, who supported the system of the Constituent Assembly. These latter have refused to cooperate in the Soviet system, and have insisted that democracy for Russia lies only in a return to the authority of the Constituent Assembly. It is not difficult to see the reason for this: under the Soviet system they would be an insignificant minority, while under the system of the Constituent Assembly they would stand a better chance of controlling the political situation. They accuse the Soviet authority of overthrowing the Constituent Assembly, which of

course was done; but the Soviets could not have done it and maintained the position without the backing of a majority opinion. Two different principles of government could not establish their separate machinery throughout the same area. In the clash of Revolutionary forces the Soviet principle won the day, and became established as the will of the Russian people. The statement that the peasants are being held in political bondage by the Soviets does not seem to be borne out by the facts of the case. The Soviet system is founded on peasant fundamentals, and satisfies peasant training and psychology. It cannot be overlooked that the peasants have not yet attempted to overthrow the Soviet system, but that on the contrary they have everywhere supported it; and that nowhere in Russia since the first Revolution has there appeared a peasant movement for the reestablishment of the Constituent Assembly.

The task for constructive statesmanship, therefore, obviously is to effect a reconciliation of all the Revolutionary parties of Russia based on the Soviet principle. It is now fairly demonstrable that to attempt a reconciliation based on the opposite principle is to invite ultimate failure. It is to attempt to sustain the small minority against the vast majority, to set up in Russia a fictitious authority not supported by the Russian people. This has been tried in lending support to the various Counter-Revolutionary movements, and now it is being tried directly by the force of Allied and American arms. Such a fictitious government would needs be supported continuously by military power from abroad. Who will promise that such a policy will not destroy the very authority which institutes it, through the revolt of the proletariat everywhere? Who will deny that such a policy makes utter mockery of the principle of self-determination, for which the democratic world ostensibly has been fighting?

The second necessary office of American and Allied statesmanship should be to assist in bringing about cohesion within the Soviet system itself. This system has sprung up like a mushroom growth throughout the length and breadth of Russia. It is natural and substantial on the legislative side, but it unavoidably lacks administrative leadership and federal cohesion. The executive branch suffers from sheer inadequacy of personnel: A legislative system based on sound fundamentals creates itself automatically out of the body and initiative of a self-governing people; but a corresponding executive system, with its enormous problems of personnel and authority, has to be built up more slowly out of training, education, and experience. The very training in local self-government throughout Russia which gives strength to the legislative function of the Soviet system militates at the start against its administrative cohesion; the provincial Soviets in some cases refuse to abide by the decisions of the All-Russian Congress, and in general the local Soviets, born of independence and intoxicated by a year of youthful authority, tend to go their own ways. The vastness of the country, the educational backwardness of the people, the lack of transportation and communication, and the inevitable provincialism of the whole regime, all aggravate this failure in administrative cohesion. In addition, a great deal of the trained administrative talent of Russia, with vision blurred by the injustices of the Revolutionary manifestation, has chosen actively to conspire against the success of the true democratic principle. As a result of all this we see a movement in Russia which superficially may look like a disagreement among the Soviets and a gradual breaking up of the system itself, but which in reality is only a natural stage in the very unequal and desperately difficult development of a Russian federation based on true democratic fundamentals.

Here again we discover that vague but nevertheless sound analogy between the Russian and the American Revolutions. In both cases the general problem is one of federation. Russia, like America, has found her true legislative fundamentals but lacks administrative cohesion. Russia, like America, has her small body of Tories, whose property is being confiscated, whose political principles are being outraged, and who are betraying her at every turn. In so far as it is possible to compare two widely separated social, political, and economic eras, the analogy holds. In America however the sole aim was political democracy; for in that day the foundations of democracy had not yet shifted from legislatures to banks and bourses, and there was no industrial autocracy to fight. Today in Russia, in a world many generations removed from that of our forefathers on the score of economic progress, the aim is social and industrial democracy through political democracy. The legislative fundamentals were of course more firmly established among the Thirteen Colonies than they are in Soviet Russia; the electorate may have been better trained in self-government, and the necessary administrative machinery and personnel were unquestionably far more extensive; but on the other hand, these very facts entailed a set of firmly grounded local antagonisms among the Colonies which is largely absent in the case of Soviet Russia. What might be called the potential cohesion of Soviet Russia is probably sounder and more substantial than was that of the Thirteen Colonies, or in other words the danger of disruption is less. The potentialities in America in 1788 were exceedingly treacherous; and America's federal cohesion was not finally established until the close of the Civil War in 1865. And for a last item of the analogy, the case of Russia, like that of the Thirteen Colonies, demands the utmost wisdom of reconciliation and vision of brave and constructive

leadership, and this not only in Russia, but quite as much on the part of the world abroad.

When we turn from the political to the economic phase of Soviet Russia, we see that they are the obverse and reverse of the same shield. However seriously Soviet Russia may have avowed the principles of Marxian Socialism, it is evident that the application of the program has not worked out along dogmatic lines, and that the final result will be far different from the original theory. As a matter of fact there seems to be much misunderstanding regarding the Socialistic nature of the Bolshevik manifestation, and room for grave doubt of its orthodoxy; reports are infinitely confusing, and passion or prejudice almost unavoidably colors the account. The impression generally accepted through the West is that the Soviets are instituting Marxian Socialism. But it has not yet been explained why formal Socialists everywhere, in Russia as well as in the Allied countries and America, are the bitterest enemies of Bolshevism. It has not been explained precisely what Bolshevism is. The fact seems to be that Bolshevism is something entirely new, something which partakes of the nature of both communism and democracy, of both Socialism and capitalism—something which has split Socialism everywhere and caused the majority of Socialists to shift their ground, leaving only the dogmatic minority within the walls of the academic Marxian doctrine. The Bolsheviks in control of Soviet Russia have awakened the thought of the world.

All this is a healthy and hopeful sign. It means that the social program of Soviet Russia is as new and untried as its political machinery; that both are in a process of rapid development, seeking impetuously to find their true bearings; and that both inevitably are destined to grow out of themselves into more stable and adaptable forms. The thing which has appeared in Russia is a thing without

theory or precedent. In a strictly literal sense it is a natural development. It is not to be estimated by physical events, or even by the acts or announced policies of the Soviet authority, but only by a free analysis of the tendencies and potentialities made manifest. What it is heading towards, what it must become, is of far more importance than what it is today. After a year of chaos, in which ideas of Socialism, communism, and anarchy have run riot along with sublime visions and great hopes in the minds of a people untutored, elemental, natively philosophic, and suffering from tragic wrongs—a people nobly disposed at heart, and suddenly endowed with the tremendous burden of its own (and perhaps the world's) destiny—it is possible to discern the vague but nevertheless certain outlines of a cosmic plan, standing solidly in the background of the Revolutionary picture.

This plan is neither Socialistic nor communistic. It is neither a bourgeois plan nor a proletarian plan. It is the plan of a free and outright representative democracy, of the rule of the actual majority, of natural resources and all forms of national wealth and productive power in the hands of the people, of work for production rather than for profit, and of government for service rather than for privilege. This is the objective towards which Soviet Russia is heading. These are the real tendencies and potentialities of Bolshevism.

In a modern economic sense Russia is a clean slate to write on. It is stated that less than three per cent of her population is made up of industrial workers. Russia is still almost wholly an agricultural state. Her vast natural resources lie practically untouched; the well of her stupendous productive power remains unopened. Only an insignificant proportion of her wealth is invested in the mechanical industries. But it is inevitable that in the course of the next fifty years Russia will be-

come to a large degree industrialized. Millions and tens of millions of agricultural workers will become factory workers; enormous new wealth will be created, and the most of it will be invested in the mechanical industries; the color and texture of the whole social fabric of Russia will change. The prospect is overwhelming; nowhere in history has such a field disclosed itself to an era so ready to seize and act upon it. The sweep of possibilities in Russia staggers the imagination. It stills the heart, as well, to realize that we of the Western democracies are permitted to assist at the birth of this new giant, and that all that we do, either right or wrong, for or against, shall surely affect the history of a great people, and shall as surely react upon the history of our children's children.

What shall be written on the clean economic slate of Russia? What shall be the fortune of that portentous economic history which is even now beginning to unfold itself? Shall it be permitted to develop naturally under the control of the Russian people, along with the development of Russia's free political institutions? Shall we in America and in the Allied countries seek with all of our wisdom and experience to assist Russia to avoid the errors into which Western democracy has fallen in the course of its industrial development? Shall we rejoice in the opportunity to put into effect in Russia, as stones in the foundation, those reforms for which Western democracy has had to pay such a heavy price in the demolition of the structure? Or shall we, actuated only by selfish motives, inspired only by greed and materialism, aware only of the temporary profit and reckless of the eternal consequence, break up the natural development of Russia's economic and political destiny (the while we hypocritically explain that we are doing it for Russia's benefit) and insist on grafting all of our own errors and vices on the free Russian stem? To

be specific, shall Russia be left to develop her own natural resources and productive power, under the control of her own popular government, or shall she be forced to undergo for a time the familiar process of exploitation at the hands of foreign capital backed by foreign arms? Shall her enormous potential wealth accrue to herself, to her people, to the benefit of Russia, or shall it accrue to banking circles in foreign capitals and to the close corporation of vested financial control?

The latter course would seem to be monstrous; and yet it is the course which so far frankly has been followed by Allied and American policy. It is the course which has prompted the bourgeoisie in Russia to revolt frantically against the Soviets; it is the course which has led the Allies (in unconscious agreement with Imperial Germany) to support counter-revolution after counter-revolution in Russia; it is the course which has inspired a propaganda from Russia utterly misrepresenting events and issues; it is the course which has called for military intervention, for recognition of a Siberian Government, for any possible action calculated to break down the authority of the Soviet system. The motive in all these acts has been the spirit of exploitation, which, when driven into the corner, takes refuge in the claim that only through the machinery of the old economic order can Russia properly be saved.

The West perhaps may have the power to break the new Russian democracy, although the breaker will be broken in the end. But the responsibility goes farther than the immediate issue. To break the new Russian democracy means, in no uncertain language, to lose the fight for the new world. It means that the great war which has just now ended will have to be fought over again quite soon and very terribly on a different field. For the fact cannot be evaded that, stripped of misrepresentation and de-

lusion, Soviet Russia's objective is essentially the same as the avowed objective of America and the Allies; or that the tendencies and potentialities of Bolshevism differ only in degree, but not in kind, from those inherent in all Western democracy. They represent the same broad fundamentals which find expression in the war aims of President Wilson, in the reconstruction program of the British Labor Party, in the program of the new Independent Labor Party in America, and in the language of thoughtful men everywhere when they discuss the growing inadequacies and palpable failures of our present governmental machinery. When we visualize industrial democracy for America, we visualize a state not so far different from the state foreshadowed by the tendencies and potentialities of Soviet Russia. Thus by the inexorable logic of human progress the truth in Russia is bound up with the truth throughout the West; and if the West deny the truth in Russia, it will have denied the truth at home. And truth denied will launch the cataclysm.

It rests with the statesmanship of America and the Allies whether our ostensible objective shall become our real objective, and shall be attained, or whether the compromise must be carried forward to disaster; whether Russia's contribution to democracy shall be recognized and accepted, or whether it shall be spurned and scattered, to appear anon behind the lines of the entrenched and self-righteous authorities; whether the West can learn its lesson in time, or whether civilization must go down in ruins before the new world appears.

LINCOLN COLCORD.

## A Voice Out of Russia

Americans have always pictured Russia as some fairyland such as India or Tibet. Formerly it was the land of the Czars, the whip, and the Cossack, and now it is the land of the still less comprehensible Bolsheviks. Yet there is a great likeness in character between Americans and Russians: for instance, devotion to land, love of liberty, natural humor, and a carefree attitude. But there is a great difference, owing to historic reasons, between the mode of life of the United States and that of Russia. First of all, the white pioneers went into the forests and prairies of this country one by one or in small groups and settled immediately as individual farmers. The Russian people migrated a thousand years ago from the Carpathians to the east en masse. They occupied lands for "artels" (groups). During that thousand years they grew accustomed to cultivating the land by communistic methods. But the American farmer is first of all an owner, whereas the Russian peasant is a communist—and here lies the reason of the success of Socialistic teaching in Russia. Second, in America material and spiritual advantages are distributed among the population more evenly than in Russia. Until the very outbreak of the Revolution the law distinctly divided the Russian "subjects" into two uneven parts: 3 per cent of the population were the so-called "privileged" classes and 97 per cent the so-called "tax-paying" people. All comforts and necessities of life, including education, were the privilege of the 3 per cent; admittance to high schools and universities, to state service and officers' rank was totally closed to the 97 per cent. It should not be for-

gotten that 85 per cent of the population were freed from the state of slavery only fifty-eight years ago, and naturally they still bear much malice to their former masters. But even among the 3 per cent of the privileged there was not full content; the capitalistic class and the Intelligentsia were deprived of political power, which was monopolized by court adventurers. Discontent was universal. It was already evident in 1905, but not being sufficiently organized, it was crushed.

The war precipitated the climax. It is well known that the war found Russia inadequately prepared. Nevertheless we performed the self-imposed duties more than honestly; we performed them with self-sacrifice. And this did not fail to react; owing to the undeveloped state of our economic life we were ruined by hunger and poverty by the third year of the war.

This did not happen at once. We passed three stages in falling down the slope. The first stage passed with the cry: "The war will end soon!" Owing to this belief the factories and shops continued to work according to the usual peace program and met the demands of the consumers at the expense of the army's needs. Russia had everything in abundance; moreover the cessation of exports created a surplus of goods. The heart of the country did not feel the hardships of the war. It is true that 12,000,000 youths and men were torn away from their families, but the tears for them dissolved in the ocean of apathy and plenty brought about by the flow of money into the villages. The last is of such great importance that we must go into details of it. We know what enormous expenditures a modern war requires. Russia did not have enough gold,

and attempts to raise internal loans were unsuccessful, owing to the ignorance of the masses. Therefore only one way was open to us, to print paper money. The sudden increase of its amount in circulation did not fail to show results; the ruble began to fall in value and prices of commodities began to increase accordingly. Inasmuch as the peasant was getting double prices, the peasant sold everything: grain, cattle, linen, grandmother's dresses. "The village is growing rich," shouted the newspapers.

But soon, very soon, the Russian peasant learned a bitter lesson as to the value of money. As thunder from a clear sky came the news of our retreat from the Carpathians in the spring of 1915. It was found that in order to proceed with the war we lacked the most necessary commodities; it was found that our children and fathers were facing the most cruel and powerful enemy totally unarmed. This brought about a feverish mobilization of our industry.

The second stage ensued and ran under the motto: "Everything for the war." We sacrificed our entire industry to the prosecution of the war. We did not merely cease to manufacture nails, candles, and agricultural machinery, but we even gave up 75 per cent of our textile industry for war needs. And thus the so-called goods famine ensued. But the country did not have articles of necessity, and although goods were yet to be obtained in the cities nothing reached the village. Having money on hand, the peasant found that he could not purchase anything with it. He could not understand it at first, but when he realized it, he became very angry and refused to sell grain for the army and cities. "I don't want your money," he said to the agents of

the Government and to merchants who would come for the grain. "Give me gingham, nails, scythes, boots—and unless you give me these, you will not get my grain." During the Czar's regime even flogging was resorted to, but the peasant was quite determined in his refusal to sell grain.

As a result of this the army and the cities remained without bread, and the cattle were partly consumed and partly starved by lack of hay. A shortage of foodstuffs began, and in addition to this many refugees from Poland and Lithuania fled in the fall of 1915 to the interior cities. Nevertheless we managed to push through the trying winter of 1915-16. And in the fall of 1916 the situation became still worse. Due to additional recruiting of soldiers a shortage of labor occurred. The cultivated area suffered a decrease of 30 per cent. And then in November there was an acute shortage of locomotives on the railroads. We never had had many of them. And during the war, owing to the intensive usage, they were worn out and there was no means of repairing them. As a result of this, the railroads were totally disorganized. On the Don and in Siberia, for instance, grain and hay were rotting at the stations, while on the Roumanian front I personally witnessed how thousands of horses were falling of exhaustion and hunger. And the inhabitants had to sustain themselves upon the meat of these fallen horses. Conditions in the cities were not much better. Hunger and cold penetrated everywhere. The most timid citizens began to complain and protest. And what meanwhile was going on within the Government? Dissipation with Rasputin and the placing of favorites in ministerial posts. All slightly capable ministers, in spite of pub-

lic opinion, were driven out and in their places were put known thieves, cretins, and traitors. A sort of madness, hopeless madness, enveloped *Tsarskoye Selo* and in the name of the weak-willed, drunken Nicholas the Russian people were governed by his German wife and a clique of scoundrels. Loyal hands, desiring to uphold the prestige of the throne, assassinated Rasputin; but in answer to this followed orgies over his corpse, the "provocation" of street disturbances in Petrograd, and the dispersing of the Duma. Then the moment came when all of us—from Lenin to Purishkevitch (the leader of the famous "Black Hundred")—understood that this sort of thing could not continue any longer, that the Czar's regime had outlived itself. And it fell—fell painlessly and with ease, as a decayed apple falls from a tree.

In place of Nicholas II came the Government of Prince Lvoff, the Government of Cadets—a revolutionary Government without revolutionists. I shall never forget the comment about this Government by a former minister of the Czar, Krivoshein. "This Government," said Krivoshein after he was told of its composition, "has one great fault; it is too moderate. Two months ago it would have satisfied the country; now it is too late. It will not have power, and thus, Sirs, you will sacrifice your own newborn child—the Revolution—and also our all-beloved Fatherland, Russia." These words proved to be prophetic. The composition of the First Provisional Government was not in accordance with the sentiment of the country. And as a result, side by side with this Government, sprang up the Soviets, backed by the confidence of the great masses of the people. Among the ministers of the First Provisional Government there were to be found no men with tech-

nical experience of state administration. Lvoff and Miliukoff gave ministerial places to their party friends. The Director of the Imperial Ballet was given the portfolio of the Ministry of Finance; a physician, the Ministry of Agriculture.

The organization of the Second Provisional Government, which included representatives of the radical bourgeoisie and Moderate Socialists, slightly changed the picture. They could not very well agree. Creative energy was expended in internal strife. The compromised decisions were not clear. The Second Provisional Government also lacked state experience and will-power. Doubtless the burden placed upon these governments by events proved to be too heavy. The time demanded giants, but instead found midgets. But what was the problem of both Provisional Governments with which they could not cope? The Provisional Governments themselves were saying that their aim was to call a Constituent Assembly. They did not realize that the Constituent Assembly *was not the final end, but only a means*, a means of expressing the will of the people and of solving problems placed before them. The substantial mistake of both Provisional Governments was that they mistook the means for the end.

When the March Revolution broke out three colossal questions confronted the Russian people:

1. What is to be done about the war?
2. How is the Russian state to be organized?
3. How are famine and economic disintegration to be stopped?

Now the Constituent Assembly was to be convoked in ten months. Even in normal peaceful times it is impossible to stop the current of life for

ten months. And a revolution is a social condition in which the pulsation of events is increased ten to twentyfold. It ought to have been self-evident that the wheel of national life could not be stopped for ten months either by Lvoff or Kerensky. No matter how they urged the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, they were themselves compelled by force of events to solve, little by little, the very questions which they desired to give over to the decision of the Constituent Assembly.

Consider the problem of the war. Was it possible to say to the Germans: "Wait, gentlemen. Do not shoot until the Constituent Assembly meets. When it meets, it will decide whether or not we shall go on killing you"? Even the Allies would not agree to such a decision. Yet in spite of the fact that we had sacrificed for the Allies about seven millions of our sons, they demanded that revolutionary Russia should participate more actively in the war.

An answer to these demands should have been given immediately. To postpone the answer until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly was impossible. The Provisional Government realized perfectly well that a hungry, barefooted Russia, with its disorganized railroads, could not possibly wage war even as it had during the Czar's regime. And the treaties signed by the Czar and the Allies could have no moral significance for free Russia. Therefore the circumstances and the dignity of Russia required that the Provisional Government give to its Allies a friendly but firm repulse. It should have demanded immediate aid and should even have threatened separate peace. At that time we still had an army, and the Germans would have paid us highly for a separate peace. But our youthful min-

isters and ambassadors, instead of taking such a firm course, bowed before the Allies and gave all sorts of assurances that Russia would never conclude a separate peace. Why then should the Allies have hastened with material aid to Russia? I do not blame them for it. "One's own interests are nearest." And meanwhile the army was diminishing and diminishing—hunger had driven the soldiers from the trenches.

State administration presented a similar picture. Its problems could not be postponed until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. By force of events the Provisional Government was compelled to tolerate the self-appointed unlawful Soviets; more than that, they had to listen to their demands attentively and as a result to proclaim Russia a Republic. This measure undoubtedly undermined the prestige of the Constituent Assembly and the belief in its indispensability. For this the Provisional Governments could scarcely be blamed. Their fault was that they had remained behind the current of life and the expectations of the people. And what were these expectations? The capitalists and the Intelligentsia, approximately  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the population, were dreaming only of seizing political power. The peasants—75 per cent of the population—were dreaming of the land. The soldiers—and these numbered about 10 per cent of the population—dreamed of peace and of returning to their dear ones at home; and finally, the workingmen, who numbered also about 10 per cent, dreamed of seizing control of industry.

The Provisional Governments promised everything, but asked for delay until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly. But the peasants and workers preferred to realize their desire to get the

land and the means of production immediately by revolutionary means. "This is safer. At present the power is in our hands, and what will happen tomorrow, we do not know." This was well understood by the Bolsheviks and this is where the meaning of their doctrine, "the deepening of the Revolution"—that is, the immediate realization of the people's desires through revolutionary means—lies. And here lies the cause of their success.

Much is being said at present that such a solution of social problems is not democratic, that violence from the Left is just as hideous as violence from the Right. In substance this is true, but the trouble is that the Kingdom of God on earth has not come as yet, and force can be crushed only by force. Every revolution provokes violence; why, asked the Russians, is it justifiable to overthrow the Czar by force, and not the bankers?

But I have anticipated. Before speaking of the present, let us return to the Provisional Governments and see how they solved the third fundamental problem; that is, the reorganization of the economic life of the country. The question can be answered in a few words: "They did not solve." Lacking economic experience and not venturing, for fear of the Allies, to decrease war production or the number of soldiers at the front, the Provisional Governments enacted nothing new. And conditions were growing worse: occupied with the "deepening of the Revolution," the workmen hardly worked. The productivity of shops and factories decreased manyfold. General economic disintegration constantly increased. The villages had no goods, and the cities and army had no bread. A real famine ensued and this was followed as usual by robberies

and violence. They reached their height in August-September of 1917—about two months before the Bolshevik Revolution took place. The Provisional Government even at that time had no authority or power. The prestige of any power is always best measured by the forces that rally around it for its defense. And the Provisional Government for its defense could only rally Junkers, a few Cossacks, and the Women's Battalion of Death. And it can hardly be said that the Bolshevik offensive was an unexpected blow to the Provisional Government. Just the reverse: the Bolsheviks widely advertised it two weeks in advance, so that the Provisional Government had sufficient foreknowledge. It is therefore evident that it was in possession of defensive forces and that the popularity of the Provisional Government was not greater than that of the Czar's.

One way or another, fourteen months ago the power was transferred definitely and finally to the Soviets, with the Bolsheviks as the dominating political power. And thus came their turn to decide the vital questions of war, state, and economic organization. The question of the war they decided to solve immediately. They disclosed the secret treaties showing imperialistic war aims of the Entente, at the same time offering the Allies a general democratic peace. The latter did not even answer! And this fact is of utmost importance, because it arouses serious doubt as to who was betrayed by whom—whether we have betrayed the Allies, or the Allies have betrayed us. Not having received any answer, the Soviet Government started *pourparlers* for a separate peace. It could not possibly have acted differently. It was impossible to wage war

further: the army had run away, the railroads had come to a standstill. Nevertheless, when the predatory tendencies of the Kaiser became evident, the Soviet Government delayed the ratification of the peace treaty and entered into negotiations with the Allies, promising to reestablish the Russian front if the Allies would come to their aid. The Allies did not accept this proposal, the sincerity of which can hardly be doubted. Lenin was obliged to present the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty for ratification to the Congress of Soviets. At that moment, as far as I am concerned, the question as to who betrayed whom was finally understood and decided. Upon presenting the peace treaty for ratification of the Congress, Lenin did not deny it was humiliating. But at the same time he insisted that this humiliation was temporary, that the German revolution was not far away. Many did not believe it at that time, but now the German revolution is an accomplished fact.

As far as state organization was concerned, the Soviet Government decided that at that time the question could be postponed. Russia was in the throes of a social revolution and in the midst of a struggle with internal and external enemies of the new order. Russia is being built by the plain people, by the peasants—slowly, firmly, and without any definite plan. To foretell into what forms this re-building will finally shape is utterly impossible. It can, however, be definitely said that the present rebuilding of Russia is not the last word of the Russian Revolution. The word "Soviet" will probably remain with us forever. The Russian people grew fond of it. It was also adopted in Germany, but the meaning attached to this word will be perfected

in the future. However, it must be kept in mind that the controversy which split Russian society into two uncompromising camps does not pertain to its meaning. This controversy does not formally touch upon the ideology of the future, but solely concerns the tactics of the present. The adherents of one camp say that it is first necessary to shape Russia into a definite political form, to establish a permanent government and to let it decide social problems slowly; that it is beyond the strength of the Russian people to accomplish a social and political revolution at the same time; that it is necessary to be satisfied for the present with the political revolution alone, and to bring about the social reforms through evolution. More than that, representatives of this camp insist that our people are young and "dark"; that the time has not arrived for them to decide their own destiny; that the people do not know what they need, but that they, the representatives of the radicals and the Socialist Intelligentsia, do know. Therefore they are the ones to govern the "dark" people, to educate the people, to prepare the people for self-government.

The representatives of the opposition camp, on the other hand, insist that their experiences with the first two Provisional Governments and especially with the third—the Omsk Government, which is now dormant in the pocket of Kolchak—is sufficient warning not to repeat mistakes. Their deep conviction is that the Russian people are interested most of all in social reforms and demand these reforms immediately by revolutionary means. Yes, the Russian people are "dark" and uncultured, but they possess a natural common sense. They will acquire their knowledge in the process of reconstruction.

Without the Intelligentsia they cannot possibly get along, but they want to select from the latter those who are willing to serve them, and not those who want to govern them against their will. The "darkness" of the Russian masses naturally obstructs the tempo of the Russian Revolution. I repeat, Russia is being rebuilt by the peasants—slowly, firmly, and without any definite plan. In this process of rebuilding much has to be broken down. It is also true that it is beyond the power of the Russian people to accomplish both political and social reconstruction. Now the Russian people are busy with the construction of a new social order, and when this shall have been crystallized into definite form, they can begin the political construction of Russia.

It can be foretold already that for the new social conditions new political forms will be required. It may also be predicted that neither the French nor the American clothes will fit the free Russian peasant; it will be necessary to sew special Russian clothes of new cuts. And such work requires time and care: "Measure the cloth seven times and cut it once," says an old Russian proverb. And history confirms it. Of all the constitutions that were ever written on our planet, the most flexible one has proved to be the Constitution of the United States. Written in 1787, with seventeen amendments, it is alive today. But it must not be forgotten that it was written in 1787, eleven years after the Declaration of Independence. Why then ask of Russia that she write her political constitution in definite form only one year after the Revolution, a revolution deeper than that of 1776? It may be retorted that social reforms require just as much care; that they also cannot be decided in haste. I perfectly agree

with this, but I also understand that the Russian people do not care to wait any longer and do not trust the "masters." No words are strong enough to convince me to the contrary. To back one's arguments with Japanese bayonets and English machine guns is just as criminal, in my opinion, as to assassinate one's own mother. And all the outcries of the interventionists—that this is a "democratic" way of helping Russia—are mere hypocrisy.

When one and one-half years ago the monarchy was overthrown in Russia, I, as well as many others, believed that Russia could not cope with the political revolution, war, and the social revolution at the same time. It was true. We were thrown out of the war, and for this we had to pay with the Brest-Litovsk treaty. But we are confronted with an accomplished fact and we are powerless to turn back the wheel of events. We have lost the war, yet in social progress we have taken tremendous steps ahead. And now the question is—What are we to do? Insist that the social revolution is untimely? Shall we, together with the reactionaries and Czarists, liquidate all the gains of the Revolution and assist the French and English in dividing Russia among themselves? Or shall we, with our opponents from the Left, defend Russia and the Revolution from her internal and foreign enemies? As far as I am concerned, there can be no question, and that is why, while remaining a Moderate Socialist, I sincerely and conscientiously believe that I must serve Russia under the Soviet banner.

There is still another point to be considered. We may not fully agree with the Soviet Government; we may doubt the possibility of realizing some of its ideals, but we can hardly deny the fact that it is consistent and clear in its demands. The opponents

of the Soviet Government have no platform whatsoever and they cannot have any. They represent the most picturesque conglomerate: side by side with old Revolutionists we see former officials of the Czar's police; side by side with noble dreamers we see the faces of criminals; side by side with monarchists we see anarchists—all of them are united in their mad desire to overthrow the Soviet Government; and the old English diplomats, who are operating behind their backs, have finally realized that such a union is not stable and that it must be replaced by a whip.

And so the Siberian khedive Kolchak has appeared on the horizon. He began his political career with the arrest of the members of the Constituent Assembly, with the reopening of the vodka factories, and with the reintroduction of the Czar's rules against Jews. So the question is as follows: Kolchak, or the Soviets?—The dictatorship of the working people, or the dictatorship of an insignificant group of adventurers, behind the backs of whom there are foreigners? The people, or generals? The decision is clear.

The Soviet Government has found it difficult to bring the economic life of Russia back to normal. The peasants have received the land, but remain without agricultural implements, nails, and textile goods. The workmen have obtained control over production, but remain without bread and without coal. Production itself has slowed down. The most important factor in this situation is the isolation of Russia. She is practically excluded from the world exchange. She is now like a besieged fortress, a fortress which the enemy wants to take, if not by force of arms then by hunger. By what right? For

what? It is said that we have committed two sins: first, we do not want to pay the debt to France. Yes, in principle we do not consider ourselves responsible for the Czar's loans, because part of them were expended for the oppression of the Russian people. But practically we do not refuse to discuss this matter—this is quite clear from the note of Tchitcherin of October 26. Second, it is being said that we have betrayed the Allies. In my opinion the Allies have betrayed us and are now dividing among themselves the booty which was promised to us. But we do not protest against this. Proclaiming a peace without annexations and contributions, Russia has renounced her participation in the division of any booty. But having sacrificed for the Allies 7,000,000 of her sons, she is justified in demanding that she be left alone. But let us assume for a second that we are guilty of breaking a treaty: then what about Italy who broke the treaty with the Central Powers? She is being complimented on it!

But we also have a third sin, of which people do not speak aloud: we are weak, but our land is rich—why not make use of it? I understand this perfectly well. Together with England we partitioned Persia and only a short while ago we dreamed of the partition of Austria and Turkey. And now *we* are being partitioned! I understand it all. I understand the English and French very well, but I cannot understand the Americans at all. We owe you very little; we have no treaties with you and never had any, and in the division of Russia you do not intend to participate. Why then do you keep your soldiers in Russia? The interests of the United States do not conflict with the interests of Russia. More than that, no other country is

more interested in the realization of the ideals of the freedom of the seas and the League of Nations, which your President is faithfully upholding in Europe, than Russia. All our seas are not free. Our Government is most of all international. Moreover the interests of exchange between Russia and America at present should be mutual. During the war the United States has tremendously developed her production, and she needs foreign markets. Russia could be one. She needs goods. She cannot of herself increase production and stimulate industry. Yet we have plenty to pay with: our natural resources are enormous. The question of how to utilize these resources in order to pay for your goods may be decided upon by mutual understanding and discussion either in Washington or in Moscow, but surely this cannot be decided by mutual destruction in the swamps of Archangel. The Soviet Government has attempted many a time to begin such discussions.

This argument is usually disposed of by referring to the Bolshevik danger. First of all, the responsibility of power has compelled the Bolsheviks to become more moderate. Second, the Soviets and the Bolsheviks are not one and the same. The Bolsheviks at the present time dominate the Soviets—to a great extent because of the policy of the Allies. Yet, fearing Bolshevism, you are cultivating it. More than that, by your actions you justify its ideology. As far as the philosophic side of the question is concerned, we differ from the Bolsheviks in the matter of natural impulses. The Bolsheviks say that such impulses are *only* class interests. We, realizing that class interests are the most important interests of mankind, nevertheless believe that mankind has

other interests: religious, moral, national, and esthetic. At present this point of view is being subjected to a difficult trial. There is some ground for your accusation that the Bolsheviks are serving the interests of one class only. But what about those who attempt to tighten a steel lasso around the neck of Russia, those who forget that she came to this condition fighting with the Allies and for the Allies —whom are those interventionists serving? The class interests of the propertied class or the ideal of justice? Is it really possible that these ideals are only a myth?

GEORGE V. LOMONOSOFF.

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## Original Decrees of the Soviet Government

### DECREE ON THE LAND

Of the Congress of Soviets of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates (passed at the meeting of October 26, 2 a.m. [Russian style]).

- (1) All private ownership of land is abolished immediately without any indemnification.
- (2) All landowners' estates, likewise all the lands of the Crown, monasteries, Church lands, with all their live stock and inventoried property, homestead constructions and all appurtenances, pass over into the disposition of the Volost Land Committees and District Soviets of Peasants' Delegates until the Constituent Assembly meets.
- (3) Any damage whatever done to the confiscated property belonging from now on to the whole people is regarded as a grievous crime, punishable by the Revolutionary Court of Justice. The District Soviets of Peasant Delegates shall take all necessary measures for the observance of the strictest order during the confiscation of the landowners' estates, for the determination of the dimensions of the plots of land and which of them are subject to confiscation, for the drawing up

of an inventory of the whole confiscated property, and for the strictest Revolutionary Guard of all the farming property on the land with all the constructions, implements, cattle, supplies of products, etc., passing over to the people.

(4) For guidance during the realization of the great land reforms until their final resolution by the Constituent Assembly shall serve the following peasant Nakaz (Instruction) drawn up on the basis of 242 local peasant nakazes by the editor's office of the Izvestia of the All-Russia Soviet of Peasant Delegates and published in No. 88 of said Izvestia (Petrograd, No. 88, August 19, 1917 [Russian style]).

The question re the land may be decided only by the general Constituent Assembly.

The most equitable solution of the land question should be as follows:

(1) The right of private ownership of the land is abolished forever; the land cannot be sold, nor leased, nor mortgaged, nor alienated in any other way. All the lands of the State, the Crown, the Cabinet, the monasteries, Churches, possession lands, entailed estates, private lands, public and peasant lands, etc., shall be alienated without any indemnification; they become the property of the people and the usufructory property of all those who cultivate them (who work them).

For those who will suffer from this revolution of property the right is recognized only to receive public assistance during the time necessary for them to adapt themselves to the new conditions of existence.

(2) All the underground depths—the ore, naphtha, coal, salt, etc.—and also the forests and waters, having a general importance, shall pass over into the exclusive use of the States. All the minor rivers, lakes, forests, etc., shall be the usufruct of communities, provided they be under the management of the local organizations of self-government.

(3) The plots of land with highest culture—gardens, plantations, nursery gardens, seed-plots, greenhouses, etc.—shall not be divided, but they shall be transformed into model farms and handed over as the exclusive usufruct of the State or communities, in dependence on their dimensions or importance.

Homestead lands, town and country lands with private gardens and kitchen gardens, remain as usufruct of their present owners. The dimensions of such lands and the rate or taxes to be paid for their use shall be established by the laws.

(4) Studs, governmental and private cattle-breeding and bird-breeding enterprises, etc., become the property of the people and pass over either for the exclusive use of the State, or a community, depending on their dimensions and their importance.

All questions of redeeming same shall be submitted to the examination of the Constituent Assembly.

(5) All the agricultural inventoried property of the confiscated lands, the live and dead stock, pass over into the exclusive use of the State or a community, depending on their dimensions and importance, without any indemnification.

The confiscation of property shall not concern peasants who have a small amount of land.

(6) The rights to use the land shall belong to all the citizens (without distinction of sex) of the Russian State, who wish to work the land themselves, with the help of their families, or in partnerships, and only so long as they are capable of working it themselves. No hired labor is allowed.

In the event of a temporary incapacity of a member of a village community during the course of two years, the community shall be bound to render him assistance during this period of time by cultivating his land.

Agriculturists who in consequence of old age or sickness shall have lost the possibility of cultivating their land shall lose the right to use it, and they shall receive instead a pension from the State.

(7) The use of the land shall be distributive, i. e., the land shall be distributed among the laborers, in dependence on the local conditions—at the labor or consumption rate.

The way in which the land is to be used may be freely selected: as homestead, or farm, or by communities, or associations, as will be decided in the separate villages and settlements.

(8) All the land, upon its alienation, is entered in the general popular land fund. The local and central self-governing organizations, beginning from the democratically organized village and town communities and ending with the Central Province institutions, shall see to the distribution of the land among the persons desirous of working it.

The land fund is subject to periodical redistributions, depending on the increase of the population and the development of the productivity and cultivation.

Through all changes of the limits of the allotments the original kernel of the allotment must remain intact.

The land of any members leaving the community returns to the land fund, and the preferential right to receive the allotments of retiring members belongs to their nearest relations or the persons indicated by them.

The value of the manuring and improvements invested in the land, in so far as the same will not have been used up when the allotment will be returned to the land fund, must be reimbursed.

If in some place the land fund will prove to be insufficient for the satisfaction of the local population, the surplus of the population must emigrate.

The organization of the emigration, also the costs thereof and of providing the emigrants with the necessary stock, shall be borne by the State.

The emigration is carried out in the following order: first the peasants without land who express their wish to emigrate; then the depraved members of communities, deserters, etc.; and lastly by drawing lots on agreement.

All of what is contained in this Nakaz, being the expression of the will of the greatest majority of conscious peasants of the whole of Russia, is pronounced to be a temporary law, which till the Constituent Assembly is to be put into execution as far as possible immediately and in some parts of it gradually as will be determined by the District Soviets of Peasant Delegates.

The lands of peasants and Cossacks serving in the ranks shall not be confiscated.

CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF  
PEOPLE'S COMMISSIONARIES. VLADI-  
MIR OULIANOFF-LENIN.

October 26, 1917. [Russian style]

#### DECREE ON WORKERS' CONTROL

Decree of the Council of People's Commissaires establishing organs for Workers' Control of Industries.

(1) In order to put the economic life of the country on an orderly basis, control by the workers is instituted over all industrial, commercial, and agricultural undertakings and societies; and those connected with banking and transport, as well as over productive cooperative societies which employ labor or put out work to be done at home or in connection with the production, purchase and sale of commodities and of raw materials, and with conservation of such commodities as well as regards the financial aspect of such undertakings.

(2) Control is exercised by all the workers of a given enterprise through the medium of their elected organs, such as factories and works committees, councils of workmen's delegates, etc., such organs equally comprising representatives of the employees and of the technical staff.

(3) In each important industrial town, province, or district, is set up a local workmen's organ of control, which being the organ of the soldiers', workmen's and peasants' council, will comprise the representatives of the labor unions, workmen's committees, and of any other factories, as well as of workmen's cooperative societies.

(4) Until such time as workmen's organs of control hold a congress, the All-Russian Workmen's Council of Control is to be set up in Petrograd, on which will sit representatives of the following organizations: five delegates of the E. C. (executive committee) of the Council (Soviet) of Workmen's and Soldiers' delegates of Russia; five delegates of the E. C. of the Peasants' Council of Russia; five delegates of the Labor Unions of Russia; two delegates of the Central Committee of the Workingmen's Cooperative Societies of Russia; five delegates of the Factory and Works Committee of Russia; five delegates of the Engineers' and Technical Agents' Union of Russia; two delegates of the Agrarian Union of Russia; one delegate from each Workmen's Union in Russia having not less than 100,000 members, two delegates from any union having a membership of over 100,000; two delegates from the E. C. of the Labor Unions.

(5) Side by side with the Workmen's Supreme Council of the Labor Unions, committees of inspection comprising technical specialists, accountants, etc. These committees, both on their own initiative or at the request of local workmen's organs of control, proceed to a given locality to study the financial and technical side of any enterprise.

(6) The Workmen's Organs of Control have the right to supervise production, to fix a minimum wage in any undertaking, and to take steps to fix the prices at which manufactured articles are to be sold.

(7) The Workmen's Organs of Control have the right to control all correspondence passing in connection with the business of an undertaking being held responsible before a court of justice for diverting their correspondence. Commercial secrets are abolished. The owners are called upon to produce to the Workmen's Organs

of Control all books and moneys in hand, both relating to the current year and to any previous transactions.

(8) The decisions of the Workmen's Organs of Control are binding upon the owners of undertakings, and cannot be set aside by the decision of a Workmen's Superior Organ of Control.

Decisions of the organs of control are given to the owners, or to the administrators of a business, to appeal to a Workmen's Superior Court of Control against the decisions fixed by any of the lower organs of Workmen's Control.

(10) In all undertakings, the owners and the representatives of workmen and of employees delegated to exercise control on behalf of the workmen, are responsible to the Government for the maintenance of strict order and discipline, and for the conservation of property (goods). Those guilty of misappropriating material and products, of not keeping books properly, and of similar offenses, are liable to prosecution.

(11) Workmen's District Councils of Control settle disputes and conflicts between the lower Organs of Control, as well as all complaints made by the owners of undertakings, taking into consideration any pecuniary conditions under which production is carried on, and local conditions. They will issue instructions within the limits prescribed by the All-Russian Workmen's Council of Control and supervise the activities of the lower organs of control.

(12) The All-Russian Workmen's Council of Control shall work out a general plan for control to be exercised by the workmen, and to issue instructions, regulations, and to systematize the reports of the various Workmen's Councils of Control; and constitute the supreme authority for dealing with all matters connected with the control exercised by workmen.

(13) The All-Russian Workmen's Council of Control coordinates the activities of the Workmen's Organs of Control and of those institutions which direct the organization of the economic life of the country.

A regulation concerning the relations between the All-Russian Workmen's Council of Control and the institutions which organize and put in order the economic life of the country will be issued later.

(14) All laws and circulars which impede the proper working of the factory, works, and other commercial institutions, and that of workmen's and employees' councils, are abrogated.

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